

## MEETING MINUTES

<b>Project:</b> Solar Facilities Citizen Advisory Committee: Meeting 2	<b>Meeting Date:</b> September 26, 2017
<b>Facilitator:</b> Dan Carlson	<b>Place/Room:</b> Kittitas Valley Event Center

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Dick Carkner, Ivan Manley, Scott Downes, Andrea Sledge, Howard Lyman, Marlene Pfeifer, Steven England, Dave Nerpel, Jeff Dunning, Theo Leonard, Susie Weis

**Committee Members Absent:** Mary Christensen

**Public Present:** Karen Poulsen, Chet Morrison

**Staff Present:** Dan Carlson (CDS), Chelsea Benner (CDS), Dusty Pilkington (CDS), Jeremy Johnston (CDS), Paul Jewel (Commissioner)

### **Meeting 1 Minutes:**

#### **Committee Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Introduction to zoning and how this relates to use tables
- Q: what if something isn't in the use table? A: try to find closest definition. This is why definitions are important
- Q: where is solar on the use table now? A: existing solar is under utilities Chapter 17.61 (15) Conditional Use required in specified zones
- Q: what is the timeline for this project? A: seeking a product by November. Extra meeting requested in 2 weeks
- Comment: Clarify communication restrictions for committee. How many sights exist that meet the criteria specified in the first meeting? Concerned with protecting prime farmland. Why not create incentives for solar? Why are we on such a fast track to get this done? How will these impact property values? Why are we in such a hurry to get results?
- Comment: Paul Jewell – We need to create an online matrix that can update comments by committee members publicly so as not to break public disclosure rules. We cannot stay in moratorium forever. We are trying to meet the letter of the law. Utility scale solar will not be governed by the same rules as personal solar

#### **Siting Criteria Work Session:**

- Q: How do these facilities impact individual solar projects?
- Q: Why not require large scale solar companies to create own substations so siting isn't limited to existing substations?
- Brian (PSE) comments: Lines generally follow the John Wayne Trail. Wild Horse electricity travels to Stevens RD area station and then to mid sea area (middle part of the Columbia/ 5 dams) where it is dispersed. Many lines travel from mid sea to Puget sound, Portland, and other areas. Kittitas County

hosts a great deal of power migration for the state. Power generated must be planned for to create balance (balancing authority) and understand which way the power will travel. Must plan for wind or solar intermittence (can the system handle fluctuation?) because rural areas generally have minimal infrastructure, large projects must be planned for carefully to prevent overloading of a line and to ensure the electricity is travelling in a direction that can accommodate.

- Cheapest siting sites for commercial facilities are right next to substations (generally follows on ramp to Highway)
- How many substations in Kittitas County?
  - Stevens RD- transmission station
  - Wild horse sub station
  - Poison Springs feed
  - Wind ridge (Stevens)?
  - Kittitas substation 4 circuits come out of Kittitas
  - HWY 97 Wool dale station 2 or 4 circuits
  - Anderson hay substation (BPA Grid) 2-3 circuits
  - Thorpe substation 2 circuits
  - South Cle Elum
  - One next to high school (Cascade is the largest in the area, near water treatment plant)
  - Easton substation along John Wayne trail
  - Substation at high ridge???
- Q: How many solar farms could the system accommodate? A: Awaiting PSE study results
- The million dollars per mile estimation for transmission lines does not always apply, it can depend on pole infrastructure
- Q: Are we putting the cart before the horse not having the information from PSE studies regarding what the grid can handle? A: the grid can always be expanded or upgraded when the money is there
- Q: Considering the market conditions is important. Smaller facilities will require a closer proximity to substations to remain feasible. Larger facilities could likely afford additional sub stations or longer transmission lines. What factors actually impact capacity and to what degree?
- Q: how will this impact the common citizen? A: Property taxes could go down
- Q: Why is the economic impact on developers being considered? Shouldn't we focus on the community needs first?
- What criteria should be considered?
  - Focus on red zone areas/non irrigable areas (contested)
  - Be Leary of absolute red lines (contested)
  - Start with low hanging fruit (wetland, streams, steep slope, floodplains, etc.)
  - critical area code already applies
  - Can we have a copy of other jurisdictions approaches?
- Q: What is considered irrigable land? A: land serviced by one of the irrigation districts
- Do we want an overlay, specific permitted zoning, or some combination?
- 70 plus percent of county is state land. We could use the state land as a solar option. The state is currently interested in solar development on public land to increase trust revenue generation.

- Group consensus:
  - General agreement on the idea that we do not want to exclude public lands.
  - Criteria other than proximity to the grid and what pencils for development should be the focus of this committee (in general agreement).
  - Reminder that the goal of this committee is to find feasible land use alternatives to avoid being bypassed by the EFSEC process. Finding a balance between community needs/goals and development criteria.
  - Agreement among committee members that we should not outlaw commercial solar

**Public Concerns and Comments/Group Discussion:**

- Customers seem to want renewable power (PSE comments). The demand is high due to increasing efficiency and cost reduction of solar
- DNR comments- reiterated DNR interest.
- 30 to 40 year lease is a long time to tie up farm land.
- Anything larger than 20MW will require a substation

**Next Steps:**

- provide mapping alternatives for next weekend
  - Provide alternative approaches/ strategies for regulations (i.e. % of irrigable land, etc.)
- Create comment matrix
- Provide minutes ahead of time for review